

impeachments. I have lived through 3—75 percent of all impeachments in the history of the United States of America.

Congress should resist the temptation to treat impeachment as just the newest form of political opposition.

Seven: Principle is important, but flexibility is essential.

While we all have areas of interest that we are most comfortable with, they may not be the greatest need of our time.

When the 9/11 terrorist attacks happened, we all had to shift our focus. When the financial markets collapsed in 2008 and 2009, it was all-hands-on-deck. And when COVID became a pandemic, we had to scramble to become health, education, and financial experts to shore up our economy and save lives.

I wish we had done more to keep schools open so that children wouldn't have suffered quite so much.

But I know that in the future we will have learned from these mistakes and we won't make them again.

That is seven lessons on how to be an effective U.S. Senator. I hope some of my colleagues find these to be helpful.

America has always been a great country, where dreams can come true. Let's keep it that way. Our citizens and elected officials alike should dream big and then work hard to make them a reality.

The job of being a U.S. Senator means making tough decisions. Please remember that good judgment in making those decisions often involves finding some balance between two parties as much as it means standing firm on your personal convictions and on the platform on which you were elected.

I hope we are all committed to supporting the ingenuity of our citizens so that they can match the likes of Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, George Washington Carver, Beulah Louise Henry, and so many others.

Government should not be a roadblock to innovation and new ideas. Rather, it should encourage new ideas, new innovation, and new possibilities to realize the untapped potential of our citizens.

I have often expressed my belief that America's best days are still ahead, and lately I have been chided for thinking that that is true. But my optimism is rooted in reality.

Our country and our citizens have an unlocked potential and an unbound determination to overcome any division, any problem.

Yes, there is much work to be done, but Americans have never been afraid to roll up their sleeves and work hard to succeed.

Think of the challenges that we have overcome since our country was founded—the Civil War, the Great Depression, two world wars, racial division, the Cold War, terrorist attacks, Presidential impeachments, disputed elections, an international pandemic, and more.

Yet none of these have destroyed the fabric of our Nation or its people, and I refuse to believe that any challenge is too great to tackle when we come together.

I stand here today in awe of the history made in the Capitol complex, the people's House, the U.S. Senate, the old House Chamber, the old Senate Chamber, and even the old Supreme Court Chamber.

Our Nation's history is crystalized here in this building. Our flaws, our triumphs, our humbling errors, and our breathtaking successes.

If you listen closely at night, when all around is quiet, you can hear the echoing voices of the ordinary men and women who became giants in our Nation's history—Sam Rayburn, Margaret Chase Smith, Everett Dirksen, Barbara Jordan, John Dingell, Tom Coburn, Barbara Mikulski, John Lewis, and so many more.

They served here with dignity and honor, and they shaped the course of a nation's destiny. They shared my optimism about our country and our future. Even in the darkest days, I know that optimism is not misplaced looking ahead.

It is hard for me to imagine that I have had the great honor and extraordinary privilege to follow in their footsteps.

I hope that my time here has had purpose and meaning. I know I have done my best to contribute and to help build a more perfect union.

I will miss you, my colleagues, and I will miss the tremendous staff in Congress who are unknown by the public, but behind the scenes, they keep everything running smoothly.

I will, especially, miss the hard-working, dedicated, and fearless men and women of the U.S. Capitol Police for the job they do to keep us safe. When trouble rears its head, they stand up. We must all remain thankful for the job they do on our behalf.

As I conclude, I want to thank my wife and my family again, as well as my colleagues and my staff.

I also want to thank the people of North Carolina for honoring me with the trust and respect. I am humbled that they sent me here to Congress eight different times, and I appreciate their support.

I yield the floor.

(Applause.)

(Ms. ROSEN assumed the Chair.)

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD BURR

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, it is hard to believe that my friend RICHARD Burr is leaving Congress. He is someone I have known since my days in the House of Representatives, and we have been friends from the very beginning. So it is difficult to imagine serving in the Senate here without him. We came to the Senate in the same year as well. Our wives are very close friends, and we have had many wonderful times with the BURRS.

In fact, I have enjoyed hosting RICHARD in South Dakota on a number of

occasions. RICHARD is an outdoors guy, as I am, and he fits right in in my home State of South Dakota—perhaps except for the fact that he is the only guy not wearing socks. Although I will say, I have found occasions which have required him to get the socks out of his suitcase. During one of our trips to South Dakota to hunt pheasants, we landed in Sioux Falls. We got off the plane and it was 7 degrees and I noticed at the next stop he had socks on. So there are limitations to his practice of not wearing socks.

But anyway one of our favorite pastimes, of course, in South Dakota is pheasant hunting, and I have had RICHARD out there a number of times during pheasant season. He is a great shot, I will say.

He has a favorite place to eat. It is Al's Oasis in Chamberlain, SD, which is known for, among many things, homemade pies.

I discovered when Kimberly and I visited RICHARD and Brooke in North Carolina, he is also a great handyman. Apparently, he thinks his guests should be as well, since he put me right to work on a new door that he was installing. We hung a door at his house. I was the grunt labor. He was the architect, the designer, and just said: Hold this and that sort of thing. So that was my job. But I was well paid for my trouble because RICHARD also, in addition to his assets and his attributes of being a handyman, is also an excellent cook. Many of you probably perhaps here don't know that. But one of the privileges that I have enjoyed in visiting RICHARD is getting to enjoy his cooking, and he really can make just about anything—breakfast, lunch, dinner. I am not saying he ought to open a restaurant in his retirement, but if he did, I would certainly be the first in line at the opening.

RICHARD has certainly left his mark on Washington. His car, a 1974 Volkswagen Thing, often parked outside the Russell Building with the top down no matter the season and adorned with his colleagues' campaign stickers, I think everybody knows is a fixture here on Capitol Hill.

RICHARD, who as well as being a handyman is a capable mechanic, could often be found working under the Thing's hood to keep it running, which has become a true labor of love, particularly here in the last few years.

But I would say that in this Chamber, of course, RICHARD is best known and really known for being an outstanding legislator. And I have to say thank you as he did to his outstanding staff. I mean there isn't anybody here who works here who doesn't know that the heavy lifting in this place gets done by staff. And so we appreciate your many years of service to him and making him such an effective and accomplished legislator. He mentioned the Capitol staff, the Capitol Police, who are here on a daily basis protecting us, just saying how much we appreciate everything you have done.

RICHARD has always been someone who knows how to get something done. In addition to building a great team and staff around him, he knows how to build coalitions. He knows how to get legislation across the finish line, and that is evident in his record of accomplishment here in the Senate. He talked a little bit about that. Promoting medical research and innovation has been a passion of his; supporting veterans, changing the way student loan interest rates are set to save families money; working to ensure that childcare settings are safe and high quality; establishing ABLE accounts for individuals with disabilities to help better their lives, and the list goes on.

Long before COVID, RICHARD was working to prepare our Nation to respond to the threat of a disaster or a pandemic; and since COVID, he has worked to ensure that our Nation's future pandemic response reflects the lessons that we have learned.

Of course, as he mentioned, his long-time work on the Intelligence Committees of both the House and Senate and as chairman here of the Senate Intelligence Committee, the number of hours I know he sat in padded rooms in classified settings making sure that our country was prepared, working with our intelligence community, as he mentioned, to protect Americans from the threats that we face here at home and around the world.

RICHARD has been a strong advocate for his home State of North Carolina, particularly for veterans. He has worked to bring new VA facilities to North Carolina to ensure that veterans and their families who were exposed to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune receive VA medical care.

I think all of us get into this life in the hope that we can one day leave Congress knowing that we have done something to make life better for our fellow Americans. RICHARD can leave Congress with that assurance.

I am going to miss him. It is a privilege and a blessing that you are able to serve with a friend for so long. I will miss our daily interactions. But I know that in Congress or not, our friendship will endure, and I look forward to seeing all that RICHARD is going to do in his next chapter in life.

I want to thank, as he said, Brooke, his sons and daughters-in-law and now grandkids for the many sacrifices that they have made through the years. I think we all know that this doesn't work unless you have got a partner, and Brooke has been a partner for all these 28 years to RICHARD and a part of everything that he has been able to accomplish here.

So I wish him and his family many more happy hours in the years ahead and congratulate him on his retirement and on a farewell speech that I think we all ought to take to heart.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, it is with a mixture of sorrow and pride that I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend the senior Senator from North Carolina.

I was thinking about the fact that Senator BLUNT, who is sitting in front of you, we were here for his farewell speech the other day, and our good friend ROB PORTMAN, who is behind you, we will be here for his—we are losing a lot of great Members this Congress, and the folks who are going to follow them will not replace them. They have got big shoes to fill.

I mean, we are celebrating RICHARD'S 18 years in the Senate and 10 years in the House—28 years of doing this stuff. Senator BURR and I first got to know each other actually through a mutual friend early on in my Senate career in kind of a strange set of circumstances. I had become really good friends with Saxby Chambliss, and Saxby and RICHARD were running buddies. I would run along with them sometimes.

And JOHN THUNE, as you know, RICHARD is a pretty open-minded guy. But I got to acknowledge, and I shouldn't probably do this in front of everyone, but I am not sure he initially took to me that well. Now, my staff has occasionally called me slightly intense, and RICHARD has more than a few times asked whether I was getting my daily meds to stay on that equilibrium. So much for that.

But in contrast, RICHARD BURR is a low-key kind of guy. As Senator THUNE has already mentioned, and every Senator has made mention or noticed or made fun of his lack of socks. We have seen the migration of his Thing from outside the Russell Building to maybe its permanent resting place now in the garage at Hart. I park next to it almost every day, and I hope that you will leave it there in perpetuity.

But despite where we started off, with us being a little bit of an odd couple, we have formed an enormously strong partnership, and for me it was, more importantly, a strong friendship.

For 5 years, RICHARD preceded me as chairman of the Intelligence Committee. He had been on the Intelligence Committee since he came to Congress. I have learned so, so much from him, not only on the substance, which is terribly important, but there are a whole series of issues and extraordinarily important work where I never really got up to speed because I trusted his judgment.

But really what he did is he set the tone for how the committee ought to operate—a committee that frankly doesn't get as much attention as most because so much of what we do is behind closed doors. The reason why the Senate Intelligence Committee has stayed bipartisan, the reason why it is so productive, the reason why we get year after year an intelligence authorization bill out virtually unanimously—never more than one or two votes against—has a lot to do with RICHARD BURR.

My friend whom he served with in the House, the dean of the Virginia delegation, Congressman BOBBY SCOTT, has often referred to, around Virginia, that the Senate Intelligence Committee is an "oasis of dignity." I think that is a pretty darn good description. And that dignity would not have come about without RICHARD BURR's leadership.

He has made mention of his staff. I want to echo that, particularly those folks I have had the opportunity to work with on the Intelligence Committee staff. This does not have to be the case. This is not always the model, and I won't make more than a passing reference to HIPSCI in that comparison. If you don't have—you have to have not only Members agreeing, you have to have staff agreeing, and sometimes staff come with their notion that we have got to start with conflict. That was never the way that RICHARD chaired the committee. He knew my staff as well as he knew his own. Nowhere was that more evident than when he took on one of the greatest challenges and one where we kind of got battle-hardened together on the Russia investigation. And one of the things I know he had pride in and I had pride in, there were an awful lot of folks who had to be interviewed. And without exception, folks who interviewed didn't know whether the interviewees were Republicans or Democrats. It was that kind of professionalism and the notion that we were going to follow the truth, and I think that work product will clearly stand the test of time.

The other thing that I think RICHARD taught me, and this was something that he has been just relentless about, is to recognize the courage and the patriotism of the men and women who work in the intelligence community. They are never going to get the recognition. Public officials get the recognition but not the men and women who serve in our military. But no matter where you travel with Senator BURR, there were generally two things that you could guarantee would take place. One is that at some moment during the trip he would find a way to get a couple hours at wherever the local bazaar was and go buy stuff until Brooke finally said: No more rugs ever again.

But what was equally important that he taught me, and he taught all of us on the committee who has come in after, is that when you are out in the field, you make sure you go see the station and not just the station chief but make sure you see all the members of the station and personally meet them and thank them. And in every hearing that we have had—and I have tried to continue this tradition—and we may not get along and we may not agree with the briefers—but at the end of that hearing, no matter how tough it may have been, he thanks the briefers, he thanks the folks who are in the back row, oftentimes not getting to the

front table, and he makes sure to say: Go back and tell the men and women you work with back at headquarters, back at station, how much we respect you and will have your back. He has shared with me a little bit in these last few weeks the kind of outpouring of support that he has had from intelligence community members both here and around the world, and we are going to have him back in January with the leadership in the intelligence community to celebrate that again.

The other thing that is a little unusual about Senator BURR—and I will say this for a few of our friends in the press—is that most of us actually like to talk to the press—or at least do it. This has never been high on Senator BURR's list. I have never seen anybody manage with complete politeness to give more nonanswers to the questions in the hallway as the press pool follows after him on so many occasions, but it is because it is all about the work.

Others have mentioned and he has mentioned that he was and has been the leading voice on disease preparedness. If we had listened more to him earlier on on things like COVID, I think part of this tragedy could have been even further averted.

I mentioned already the Russia investigation. We both took incoming on that. Both of our sides wanted us to do it differently. He said: We are going after the truth. I can assure you, there is no one I would rather be in a foxhole with than RICHARD BURR because when the incoming kept coming in, he said: Let's buckle down, do the work. He empowered the staff to do that in a way that was remarkable, and, again, that product will stand the test of time.

I am sad to lose a colleague. I think his admonitions to us were great. I think his recognition—again, this is so RICHARD BURR in that he has got so many staff here, and he put the staff not in a passing reference but as one of the major themes of his speech. We all would not be here without the kind of men and women who have supported you and who support each of us who have the honor of standing on this floor.

I am going to be really sad to at least lose the daily back-and-forth as a friend. He is a little bit quirky. He is not shy about giving somebody grief.

I am not sure there will ever be another Senator with the same tastes in footwear or sockwear or lack thereof. He clearly has been one of the Senate's true characters in the best sense of the word.

I have had the occasion to get to know Brooke and his kids. I have seen lots and lots of pictures of the grandkids, and I am glad some of them live in Richmond. We will visit there and on the Outer Banks.

He has a great next chapter in front of him. I think he is going to continue to contribute to this Nation in the business world. I look to see where that path leads, and I look to making sure this friendship that we have built will

be maintained long into the future, into our each increasing dotages in going forward.

With that, I yield the floor and salute my dear friend RICHARD BURR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, my apologies to the distinguished senior Senator from Maine.

Senator BURR knows the one thing he was also extraordinarily critical of was whenever members of the Intel Committee were late to an Intel meeting, and we have one at 2:30.

So, Senator BURR, I hope I have your ability, and Senator COLLINS will give me a rundown on her comments today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, how heartwarming it has been today to witness RICHARD BURR's farewell speech to his colleagues, his staff, the Members of the Senate, his constituents, and, indeed, all Americans, and equally heartwarming it has been to listen to the heartfelt tributes that he is receiving from those of us who have been privileged to share with him.

During his 28 years in Congress as both a Member of the House and of the Senate, RICHARD has been a strong voice for responsible government and bipartisanship.

I join my colleagues in thanking him for his truly extraordinary service not just to the people of his beloved North Carolina but to all of our country. Throughout his service, RICHARD has consistently reached across the aisle to meet challenges and to move our Nation forward.

As the leader of the Senate's Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, he has supported innovations in our healthcare system that have made a real difference for his fellow Americans. These advancements include enhancing the ability of cutting-edge treatments and medications to reach patients as well as advocating for historic funding increases for biomedical research.

RICHARD has also left a lasting mark on education policy for Americans of all ages. He has worked to ensure that the very youngest learners have the best possible opportunities in life by supporting early education through Head Start and quality childcare and by supporting afterschool programs through the child care and development block grant.

He has sought to increase the affordability of higher education by authorizing the Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act, and he has helped Americans obtain good-paying jobs by strengthening workforce development programs.

RICHARD was also a member of the bipartisan group that shepherded the Great American Outdoors Act through Congress. Two years ago, I was proud to join him when that bipartisan bill was signed into law. This historic legislation fully funds the Land and Water

Conservation Fund that supports access to the great outdoors for all Americans. It is preserving and creating recreational opportunities from the Outer Banks to the Pacific coast.

Perhaps less well-known but also important is the fact that RICHARD has been a champion of civil rights. He spearheaded the passage of the ABLE Act—one of the most important laws for individuals with disabilities since the Americans with Disabilities Act.

He partnered with Congressman John Lewis, the late civil rights icon, to reauthorize the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crimes Act to right the wrongs committed against African Americans that were never investigated.

When in 2010 former Senator Joe Lieberman and I led the fight to repeal the discriminatory don't ask, don't tell law that prohibited patriotic Americans from serving in the military due to their sexual orientation, RICHARD stepped forward to help ensure that successful repeal.

As chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, RICHARD oversaw the Agencies that helped to keep our Nation safe and ensured that they had the tools needed to guard against foreign threats.

In addition, as Senator WARNER has mentioned, at a time of intense partisanship, he led the investigation into Russian attempts to meddle in U.S. elections. He deserves enormous credit for keeping our committee focused on the task at hand and for producing a fact-based account of the events surrounding the 2016 election.

There is a final story that I want to end with about RICHARD, and it is repeating in many ways what our chairman, MARK WARNER, has said.

I, too, have accompanied RICHARD Burr as he has visited with our men and women of the intelligence community at stations around the world. He doesn't just receive the intelligence briefings, as you would expect. No. He goes beyond that. He makes the effort to thank each and every one of our intelligence community's staff, who are serving in stations, sometimes in dangerous conditions, often being separated from their families or enduring hardship. He thanks each and every one of them. That tells you a lot about who RICHARD Burr is.

RICHARD, thank you for your countless contributions to the U.S. Congress and to our Nation. I join your friends and colleagues in wishing you and Brooke all the best in the years to come.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, in calculating, it may be possible that I have served on the Intel Committee longer than anybody besides RICHARD Burr currently on the committee, with some time in the House—but not all of the time in the House—and in the Senate. It is truly amazing the depth of understanding he has of programs, of

capacity, of the places we are all over the world.

I think he and Senator WARNER have done a great job of maintaining that committee as a bipartisan committee, working together, understanding that most of what we do and that most of what we talk about is only seen by us and the staff of that committee. It is an important responsibility to ask questions and hear answers that others Members can't. RICHARD's leadership has been incredible.

I want to spend a few minutes talking about the other portfolio he has that I am also involved in as the appropriating chairman on the Health and Education and Labor Committee.

In so many ways, particularly after COVID, RICHARD, we became the team—the authorizing and the appropriating—so we could make this all work together.

Efforts are extraordinary as well. We heard the long list of things he did to create an understanding of what we needed to do—the whole idea of rapid response, of BARDA, of having a stockpile. All of this is—not only is so much of it RICHARD's idea, but also RICHARD has kept the idea alive.

I will just tell you this is from absolute personal and occasional knowledge in the press—they are wondering: Now, why are you still spending that money on the stockpile? We didn't use it last year, and we didn't use it the year before. Why do you think we need to have things in that stockpile that are usable and have efficacy now?

RICHARD has been there. Often, the only people advocating for the stockpile, advocating for being ready for things we hope don't happen, are the manufacturers who are willing to manufacture this and RICHARD BURR and others—that very small group of people who say: We have got to be ready.

Now we are talking about, with RICHARD's leadership again, being ready in other ways, where we are ready to manufacture and have a rapid response like we did with COVID, where we now, maybe, have the capacity to figure out very quickly what we need and produce that, but you have to have the kind of relationship to have that rapid production.

You know, when something like this happens, everybody is willing to do everything, and, frankly, everybody is willing to spend everything, but that is likely too late. You have to be willing to plan everything and be prepared to execute a plan rather than “Now we have a problem; let's do whatever it takes.” RICHARD BURR has been there in thinking about how we plan, how we prepare, what kind of relationships we need to have.

On top of that, the biomedical research and the new interest in synthetic biology—so much of that leaves this building and this floor when RICHARD leaves. I think there are so many ways he can be and will be available to the country and will be a service to the country, but showing up every day, in

every Congress, in every session, and to every meeting with the knowledge he has brought to those issues is incredibly important.

We see the possibility of health used in a warlike way. We see the interest and the need to look into this to see what has happened or what could happen. Let me just say that, from the Health, Education, and Labor job that I have had, I have been able to see, maybe like nobody else has, the Health, Education, and Labor commitment and understanding he has. I am grateful for that. I am grateful for his friendship.

I look forward to things he and I could continue to find to do together, but I am grateful for the fact that he has been here when he was so needed and stepped up in such a significant way.

Our good friend Lamar Alexander on that committee, in the height of COVID, also very close to both of us, was very dedicated to this work. When Lamar left, I said one of the things I am most grateful for is that I got to serve in the Senate that included Lamar Alexander. I am also grateful that I got to serve in the Senate that included RICHARD BURR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I am here on the floor to congratulate my friend from North Carolina, the Tar Heel State.

We go back a few years. He is from Winston-Salem, where my wife is from. Our spouses actually waitressed together back in Winston-Salem during high school, and they are still buddies. Brooke and RICHARD are dear friends.

More importantly for today, RICHARD has been a terrific representative of the State of North Carolina—first, in the House of Representatives, where I served with him when I was a Member there from Ohio; and then he snuck over to the Senate, a little bit ahead of me, and kind of laid the groundwork.

We have had the opportunity to work on so much together, RICHARD.

I think of every major bipartisan achievement in this place, and you will see RICHARD's fingerprints on it.

So to his staff who are here, I know those are your fingerprints as much as his; so congratulations.

They haven't always been easy issues. Sometimes they have put RICHARD in a difficult political position, but he did what he thought was right for his beloved State of North Carolina and for the country.

Today, I have heard a lot about healthcare. I like healthcare. That is great to talk about it, but I want to talk about something else. But first, on healthcare, I must say, on Operation Warp Speed, it was remarkably successful. I think everyone has to acknowledge that now. No one in this Chamber was more responsible for laying the groundwork for that than RICHARD BURR. I am not sure people understand that. But on all the discussion

about RICHARD's innovation and your work on healthcare, I think that is one that perhaps needs to be emphasized.

You have also done a good job in other areas, as we talked about today, and the Intelligence Committee, in particular. I will tell you that RICHARD and I have traveled the world a little bit together. We will go to some hot spot, and I will be dutifully going to the meetings, you know, with the political leadership of the country, and RICHARD will disappear, and he will show up a few days—no, a few hours—later. We will have a good conversation about things he is not allowed to tell me about. So he doesn't tell me everything. But the bottom line is, he is in touch with intelligence people not just here in Washington but around the world and expressing our support for them and our encouragement for them for the difficult jobs that they do on behalf of our country and, really, you know, keeping the world a less dangerous and less volatile place.

RICHARD, I have seen you in action on that, but I want to talk about something else, which is his love of the outdoors and his work on conservation.

We are cochairs of what is called the International Conservation Caucus. This is a group of Members, two Democrats and two Republicans—Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator COONS for the Democrats, Senator BURR and I for the Republicans—who talk about international conservation issues around the world. These are issues that are directly related to economic development, directly related to security, to terrorism.

When you think about it, the wildlife trafficking that goes on in places like Africa, where people are trafficking in ivory or rhino horns and so on, so much of that is related to providing funding for terrorist groups over there and causing a lot of insecurity in those areas.

It is the same thing in terms of economic development. Many of these natural areas, once destroyed, don't provide the ability for clean water, for food, for ecotourism, which brings in money for these countries. So it is all related.

But, ultimately, I think RICHARD got involved because of his love of nature and the outdoors. And the biodiversity that he has helped to maintain around the world, not just here in this country, has been one of the beneficiaries.

There is a piece of this that I think also hasn't gotten enough notice today—that is my job to sort of clean up here—and that is not just his work on what is called the Great American Outdoors Act, and there were a number of provisions in there. One of mine was on the national parks, which RICHARD helped me with, restoring our national parks. But there is one piece in there that I believe would not have been successful without RICHARD's advocacy over many years.

He really wanted to make sure that we put our money where our mouth

was in terms of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, or LWCF. If you don't know what that is, then ask any of your county commissioners or Governors or others who take advantage of it, township trustees, community leaders, and, certainly, conservation groups, because this is funding that helps with matching funding—typically, local, State, sometimes other Federal funding—to ensure that areas are protected, that parks can be built, and so on.

Congress is very good about saying: We are all for that. We are going to—what we call around here—authorize the legislation to do that, but then we didn't provide the money.

What RICHARD said over the years was: Well, if this is such a good idea, why don't we fund it like we are supposed to?

That was actually falling on deaf ears for quite a while, I think it is fair to say, but RICHARD was persistent.

I recall being at the White House signing ceremony for that larger legislation, the Great American Outdoors Act, knowing that one of the most significant elements of that was full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. That was because of one Senator, and that is RICHARD BURR.

So, RICHARD, it has been a pleasure to serve alongside of you. I wish you and Brooke, William, and Tyler the very best going forward.

I suspect if you want to see RICHARD, you are going to have to go to his beloved North Carolina shore, particularly, the Outer Banks, where you might see him fishing for tuna or doing something else very productive.

So Godspeed, my friend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, we have heard a lot of great comments. First, we heard great words from Senator BURR. I hope that people yield and learn from the lessons.

We have also learned a lot about his body of work over the 28 years that he has been in the House and the Senate.

He mentioned Speaker Boehner earlier, who was probably crying as he listened to RICHARD's comments. I have a tendency, when I see a friend leaving, to get a little sappy too. So to make sure that we keep Speaker Boehner on the leaderboard for the one who cries the most, I want to talk a little bit about our relationship.

We knew each other before I came here. I was speaker of the house when I first met him. But I learned a lot from him over the last 8 years, and I have seen him work in a way that is unique among many Members.

I feel like you sum up RICHARD BURR by his patience, his practicality, and his persistence.

He is a very patient person. He doesn't think in terms of, we have got to get this done this Congress. He looks at the reality of the situation, and he just continues to build support until he gets it done.

He is practical. He looks at something, the face of the policy, and he decides whether it makes sense. And he is willing to take the political hits to get good policy done—policy, to use RICHARD's words, that has purpose and meaning.

And, man, is he persistent. We have had a lot of people talk about the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I watched him work this, and he worked it for quite some time. And when it was finally set up to get passed, he was making a few people and his own conference a little bit uncomfortable because of his encyclopedic knowledge of procedure.

I can remember one scene when he was walking down this aisle, when we were working to get agreement, that it reminded me of a scene in a western comedy from many years ago.

People down there were saying: Don't shoot him; it will just make him mad.

He knows how to get things done. I have learned a lot from him, and I am going to miss him. But with all due respect to John Boehner, I am going to have your friendship for the rest of my life.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, interspersed among the farewell speeches, which are always enjoyable to listen to as people reminisce about their time in the Senate and that causes all of us to reflect on our role and what we have done to help our country and help our constituents—and no one has done it better than the Senator from North Carolina—we also have a few things to do before we break for the holidays. Perhaps the next important thing that we have to do is to pass the National Defense Authorization Act, which, of course, provides the authorities necessary to strengthen our Armed Forces, to modernize our defense, and to maintain the peace.

This year's Defense authorization act includes a significant increase in defense funding, which, in light of the range of threats confronting our country and the world, is appropriate, coming in roughly at \$45 billion above the White House's most recent budget request.

This is a bipartisan increase in the authorization, which is the appropriate role of Congress to tell the White House: We think you have low-balled the number, and we think the threats deserve even more support in terms of the funding.

These investments are absolutely critical to our military and our national security, but we all know this legislation is more than just about funding levels. It includes a range of bipartisan bills to support those who wear the uniform and their families, our allies, and our national defense as a whole.

It really includes a lot of different bills in this umbrella of the National Defense Authorization Act. One exam-

ple of one of those components is the Protecting Our Servicemembers through Proven Methods Act, which I introduced with Senator SINEMA of Arizona and a bipartisan group of colleagues.

The goal of this bill is to focus on proven methods that empower military leaders to prevent sexual assault and harassment in the military from happening in the ranks.

The RAND Corporation, the think tank, published a 10-step approach to strengthen sexual assault prevention in the military, and step one is all about data. We need a clear picture of the problem before we can craft the most appropriate and effective solutions.

Our bipartisan bill specifically answers that recommendation by requiring the Department of Defense to collect data on the causes behind sexual assault, harassment, and domestic violence in the military.

That data will better inform our decision making within the Department and beyond. It will help guide our work in the Senate, too, where there is a bipartisan commitment to ending sexual assault and harassment in the military. And I hope it leads to stronger prevention efforts across the board.

Our bill requires the Department of Defense to confer with universities and public health institutions to best identify the practices that will combat these abuses, whether that is in the workplace or on college campuses. Reliable data will then inform our prevention efforts and help stop those acts before they occur.

We go to great lengths to keep our servicemembers safe on the battlefield, and these efforts need to extend to every part of their service. I am glad this legislation was included in this year's National Defense Authorization Act, and I appreciate all of our colleagues who fought to make that possible.

The Defense authorization bill provides a great opportunity to support our friends and allies around the world, and this bill takes big steps to further support Ukraine against the outrageous invasion effected by the Russian Federation on February 24 of this year.

We know that the United States can't focus on countering Russia or supporting Ukraine; we need to do both. Over the last 10 months, we supplied Ukraine with critical military assistance, and this year's Defense Authorization Act will give Ukrainian soldiers even more resources to keep up the fight.

And I am glad this bill also includes a provision which will impose greater costs on Mr. Putin and the Russian Federation. Since Russia launched its attack on Ukraine, the United States and our allies have imposed sanctions on Russian businesses and oligarchs and cut off Russian banks from the global financial system.